

## EAST WINDSOR POLICE COMMISSION

**REGULAR MEETING: October 13, 2010**

**East Windsor Police Department**

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by acting chairman Dick Sherman. Chairman Sinsigallo notified the commission she would be arriving late (8:10) to the meeting due to another town commitment. Commissioners Nelson and Stremper were present as well as Chief of Police Edward DeMarco and Deputy Chief Roger Hart. Commissioner Sauerhoefer was absent. Also in attendance were Selectman John Burnham, Selectman Richard Pippin and Board of Finance member Kathy Pippin, as well as the Warehouse Point Fire Commissioners.

### 2. ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:

Commissioner Nelson added agenda item "Grievance 10-03" under *7b. New Business*.

### 3. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes from the September 8, 2010 regular meeting were reviewed by all commission members. **MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to accept the regular meeting minutes of 9/8/10, as presented. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTE IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL THOSE VOTING, VOTED IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

### 4. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES:

**A) Police Department – Monthly Billing:** **MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to accept the monthly billing, including Animal Control, as of 10/6/10 with a total amount of \$ 12,113.69. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper.

Commissioner Nelson asked for clarification regarding the Bosco's amount of \$1754.67. Deputy Chief Hart stated that the 2005 Ford Taurus needed wheel bearings, rear struts, tires and cooling system repairs.

No further discussion.

**VOTE IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

**B) Police Department – Financial Statement:** **MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to accept the monthly financial statement, as presented 10/6/10. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper.

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

**C) Police Commission – Monthly Billing:** **MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to approve the monthly billing dated 9/30/10 in the amount of \$ 125.61. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

**D) Police Commission – Financial Statement: MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to accept the police commission monthly financial statement dated 9/30/10, as presented. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

## **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

## **6. TRAFFIC AUTHORITY:**

None

## **7. NEW BUSINESS:**

A) WHP Fire Commissioners:

The Chairman of the WHP Fire Commissioners, Vic Decapua handed out information to the police commissioners, Chief and Deputy Chief. Mr. Decapua explained the current problems with regards to dispatching the fire department to emergencies in the last few months. Mr. Decapua stated that by not dispatching the fire department it has put the department and the town in jeopardy to lost/late response time and sometimes no response at all.

Mr. Decapua reviewed the information with the group regarding some specific incidences – a fuel spill on Rt. 140/Shoham Rd, a bag on fire on Rt. 140 bridge and two incidences of arson of which the fire department and Fire Marshall were not called and they found out about it days later. Mr. Decapua continued by reviewing the state statute with regards to suspicious fires in a public building. Discussion continued regarding an incident of a person in the river (9/9/10 2:20pm) and the Windsor and Enfield departments were dispatched with their rescue boats. Later in the conversation, Chief DeMarco took a moment to explain the events as they unfolded during that incident to clarify questions. Chief DeMarco stated that he called upon the Windsor Police Department for assistance with this incident as EW was in pursuit of a suspect. Windsor Police decided to dispatch their fire department and their air boat, not at the Chief's request. At one point (on the radio), Chief DeMarco did ask for WHP Fire and their boat. A Deputy Chief replied that their boat can not operate on those low conditions. Windsor Fire notified Enfield Fire.

Chief DeMarco stated that he had a meeting with both fire department officials and ambulance to discuss who gets called out.

Chief Barton created a policy to potentially use as a guideline – definitions, dispatch procedures and what is a Fire Rescue/EMS response (created 7/14/10). Mr. Decapua reiterated that the department is concerned that there is no policy up and running therefore causing confusion on who is in charge.

Firefighter Dean Saucier sighted another incident where the department was not dispatched, but should have been. Mr. Saucier explained that there was a bomb scare at the Army base in East Windsor of which the Hartford Bomb Squad responded. Mr. Saucier expressed concern over the lack of communication between the departments and that in the last 3-4 years, the fire department has not been dispatched as they have been in the past. He explained that the Warehouse Point Fire district was congressionally mandated in 1911 and the commission was elected without

political influence. He stated their function is to protect life and property within the district. Mr. Saucier did comment that the fire department has always worked with the police department very well. Discussion/comments continued.

Police Commissioner Nelson questioned if the fire department felt that they were not being dispatched due to politics. Mr. Saucier responded and clarified that he was not inferring it was politics in his previous comment, just that they are not being dispatched.

Fire Commissioner Jim Barton (158 S. Water Street) stated that the practice of sending an officer to verify a fire call or to determine if the fire department needs to respond is unnecessary, inappropriate and dangerous. He stated that the Police Commission has the opportunity and responsibility to stop that practice.

Commissioner Nelson questioned who should go first is the issue at hand. Mr. Barton responded that any call with regards to a fuel spill should dispatch the fire department right away, not as a second dispatch. Commissioner Stremper commented that the commission is and has been working on a dispatch policy and are taking it very seriously, but that it does take time to write.

Chief DeMarco commented that of the 7 ½ years he has been with the department, he has experienced no issues in the first seven years with the fire department. Chief DeMarco stated that the fire department brought their concerns to his attention and he immediately took action. Chief DeMarco also explained why a submitted policy can not just be “rubber stamped” and initiated. He took a moment to explain the process involved with a unionized group and needing to use “accreditation for policy writing”. Again, Chief DeMarco reiterated that although immediate action was taken, the process does take some time to complete and implement. Chief DeMarco stressed the he is working with the fire department to be part of the solution, not the problem.

Deputy Chief Hart added that after meeting with the fire chiefs on 7/14/10, he sent out an email on 7/15/10 to all staff employees and fire department officials regarding the procedure for the call taker when specific calls come in (medical, fire, domestic, etc). After some fire commissioners stated they did not receive the email, Deputy Chief Hart read the email and the list of addressees. Deputy Chief Hart also explained that there is a process to get the policy issued and implemented and that each issue will be assessed and dealt with swiftly.

Discussion continued regarding specific incidences that occurred and the lack of communication. Questions arose about how dispatch works with regards to fire, medical, police calls that come in. Chief DeMarco lead a brief discussion on how and why dispatch handles specific calls and that there is not an all inclusive dispatch. Mr. Barton reiterated and stressed the immediate need to dispatch the fire department for any fire call. Mr. Saucier did comment that the call that came through regarding an incident on Winthrop Rd. two weeks ago went like clock work.

Mr. Decapua again stressed that the fire department wants to be dispatched quickly and without hesitation. It was also mentioned that the Police Chief and Fire Chiefs meet quarterly or even semi-annually to touch base. It has already been agreed upon.

Chief DeMarco added that he is not sure why emotions have come into play with this situation and why it has seemed to have snowballed. He reiterated that the department is working steadily on a sound and secure policy to put into place but that it does need to be properly administered. That will also include time to do training and have employees sign off, for accountability. Action has and is continuing to be taken.

Mr. Decapua stated that at one time the three departments never talked but now all three do get along and no one wants to move backwards. He stated that there are good working relationships, but lately feels as if the teams are getting too far split. Chief DeMarco stated that the teamwork goes both ways and both departments have made mistakes. Mr. Decapua stated that the fire department would like to be kept in the loop with regards to the progress of the policy. Commissioner Stremper mentioned that Gerry Bancroft (BBFD) has been aware of the on-going policy. Chief Barton commented that there are still incidences that are occurring and the situation has not gotten any better. Chief DeMarco reminded the fire commissioners that the policy is not officially in place yet and implemented, but days away from closing.

Mr. Decapua asked if there was an old policy in place, from early on, for dispatching. Both the Chief and Deputy Chief responded that they have done some research but have not been able to locate one, except for something written that was less substantial than what the 7/15/10 email stated. The Deputy Chief added that sometimes

dispatchers need to make judgment calls and 95% of the time they are right. To reiterate the fact that the proper steps need to be taken, Commissioner Nelson added that although some grievance that come in do not make any sense, things need to be done the right way and it is not as simple as it seems.

B) Grievance 10-03:

Union is not present. Chief DeMarco did respond and denied grievance. Chief briefly discussed the problem that is occurring and that it can not be fixed by the police department or police commission. Commissioner Nelson asked about postponing the discussion and decision – Chief DeMarco stated that it must be responded to within 30 days.

A situation occurred with the prescription co-pays. Deputy Chief Hart explained the issue was brought to their attention at the end of September. Apparently certain co-pays have exceeded a maximum amount (mail order prescriptions), therefore the amount due was charged to the employees' credit/debit card. Deputy Chief Hart continued to explain that he started to repair this issue right away and notified the employees that he was in the process of fixing the issue. Less than five days later, a grievance was presented. The Chief and Deputy Chief had a conference call with The Litchfield Group (insurance administrator), Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the Treasurer and the Selectman and came to a resolution and fixed the issue. The Deputy Chief sent an email (10/6/10) to the affected employees explained the problem, the resolution and provided them with the Anthem contact person and phone number to contact for immediate assistance if a problem arises while the Anthem system corrects itself (could take up to 3 weeks). To the police department's knowledge, the issue has been fixed. On 10/12/10 a notice that the grievance has gone to 2<sup>nd</sup> step was received.

Commissioner Nelson made a **MOTION** to deny the second step of grievance #10-03. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS:

A) information on a roundtable discussion for CT Transportation Institute (11/9/10 at UCONN-Farmington)

## 9. MONTHLY REPORTS:

A) Chief of Police – Provide information to the commissioners

1. regarding item #5: Memo (10/12/10) for added appropriations to submit immediately. Chief DeMarco commented that the department is working with the budget and had warned the police commission that the department may not be able to make budget. Has worked over the years to work within the budget and under current circumstances will not be able to make budget.

**MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to approve the request for added appropriations to submit to the proper town agency in the total amount of \$117,935.00 to be distributed as follows:

1-01-15-2145-1-102     \$40,000

1-01-15-2145-1-103     \$49,565

1-01-15-2145-3-380     \$ 3,500

1-01-15-2145-4-430     \$ 9,320

1-01-15-2145-4-431     \$ 9,000

1-01-15-2145-6-620     \$ 6,550

**SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

2. CIP request for three vehicles:

The department has purchased two, but is in need of a third. Chief submitted request to Police Commission via memo dated 10/13/10. All commissioners received a copy of the memo and reviewed it.

**MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to give Chief DeMarco permission to approach the proper town agency for the third vehicle that is in CIP, for the amount of \$28,575. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Request to release, via proper protocol, one unmarked car and one marked cruiser to the 1<sup>st</sup> Selectmen's office.

**MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to permit Chief DeMarco to submit, to the proper town agency through proper channels, one unmarked cruiser and one marked cruiser in order to remove them from the police department's fleet. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

B) Commission Members:

None

## **10. PUBLIC INPUT – Comments and Discussion (5 minutes maximum time per subject)**

Elyse Fila (31 Niederwerfer Rd) expressed concern about the intersection of Niederwerfer Rd/Matthew Ln/Rockville Rd. She states that with the significant amount of new development in the Windsorville section, the area has seen increased traffic and accidents at the above mentioned intersection. Ms. Fila also mentioned that Matthew Ln. is not an approved road and there is a drainage issue that needs to be addressed.

Ms. Fila continued by suggesting that a stop sign be placed on Matthew Lane (currently there is none) and also a stop sign just before Griffin Rd would slow traffic enough to prevent any major accidents, as there is a blind turn at Griffin Rd. Ms. Fila proposed that the town takes a look at the traffic pattern in that vicinity. Deputy Chief Hart stated that the issue was addressed with the developer in 2008 and that the developers are responsible for signage – they have failed to do so. Deputy Chief Hart stated that the department can contact the State Traffic Commission.

Brief discussion followed, including what signage may be appropriate for that location and steps to be taken. Chief DeMarco suggested proceeding with the Matthew Lane issue first and then petition with the state regarding the intersection and traffic on Rockville Rd in that area.

**MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to give Chief DeMarco permission to pursue why a sign has not been installed on Matthew Lane and to take appropriate actions to have one placed there; also to check into the feasibility of an appropriate traffic control sign on Rockville Road. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper. No further discussion.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

Selectman John Burnham commented that at the Selectmen's Forum at Scout Hall, the topic of making the railroad tracks on Apothecaries Hall Rd. exempt came up. Selectman Pippin will be contacting Rail Operations to find out more information.

Commissioner Sinsigallo commented that she passed along information regarding issues at Red Hill to the Chief.

Selectman Pippin noted that appropriations are usually done at the first Selectmen's meeting of the month, not the second meeting of the month.

## **11. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A) Legal Update

**MOTION** made by Commissioner Nelson to go into Executive Session (8:21pm) to include the Chief and Deputy Chief. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper.

**VOTE IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

Executive Session ended at 8:34pm.

No action taken.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Nelson made a **MOTION** to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:35pm. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stremper.

**VOTED IN FAVOR:** Nelson/Sherman/Stremper

**ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Pellegrini - EWPC Recording Secretary